

United States Department of Agriculture Employee Performance Plan and Appraisal Record (03/17/10)
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Employee Name (Last, First, MI):	Position Title:	Series/Grade:
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Agency: USDA, Departmental Management, Office of Human Resources Management	Appraisal Period Dates (From/To): October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010
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Plan Development - Consultation and Certification
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Signatures below certify that the rating official has developed the performance plan in consultation (direct communication) with the employee and has discussed the final plan with the employee. The discussion occurs at the beginning of the performance period or at any other time a performance plan is put in place. The rating official provides the employee with a copy of the plan.

Employee Signature:	Date:
Rating Official's Signature:	Date:
Reviewing Official's Signature:	Date:

Progress Reviews

Initials below certify the performance discussions occurring within the appraisal period. A minimum of one progress review is required.

Employee's Initials and Date:	Employee's Initials and Date:	Employee's Initials and Date:
Rating Official's Signature and Date:	Rating Official's Signature and Date:	Rating Official's Signature and Date:

Summary Rating (Check One)

Rating Official: Check the summary rating level determined using the attached Element and Summary Rating Guide.

☐ Outstanding
 ☐ Superior
 ☐ Fully Successful
 ☐ Marginal
 ☐ Unacceptable

Rating Official's Signature:	Date:
Reviewing Official's Signature:	Date:

I have an understanding of USDA and Agency ethics and conduct regulations. ☐ Yes ☐ No

This evaluation has been discussed with me and I have been given a copy. Signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the rating.

Employee's Signature:	Date:
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ELEMENT AND SUMMARY RATING GUIDE

Performance Element Rating Level Descriptions:

Element ratings are to be based on observable performance and behaviors during the appraisal period. The following three level element rating scale is to be applied to the appraisal of each individual performance element at the end of the appraisal period.

Exceeds Fully Successful. Performance in an element that, overall, exceeds the performance standards established for the meets fully successful level.

Meets Fully Successful. Performance in an element that meets the standards established for the meets fully successful level. The employee is completing the work assigned to do at the expected level of performance.

Does Not Meet Fully Successful. Performance in an element that falls below the standards established at the meets fully successful level. Documentation is required for each element evaluated as does not meet fully successful.

Assignment of Element Ratings:

Rate actual performance by entering 2 appraisal units for critical elements and 1 appraisal unit for non-critical elements in the boxes shown below. Tally the total appraisal units assigned for each column.

Element 1 (Critical)	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Fully Successful	
Element 2 (Critical)	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Fully Successful	
Element 3 (Noncritical)	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Fully Successful	
Element 4 (Critical for Supervisors)	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Element 5 (Critical for Supervisors)	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Totals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Converting Element Ratings to Summary Rating:

The summary rating is determined using the table below. The Mission Results element has the greatest emphasis for measurable results. After each element rating level has been determined, the supervisor will assign the summary rating by applying the following descriptions.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Outstanding</u> All appraisal units are at "exceeds fully successful."	<u>Superior</u> The number of appraisal units at "exceeds fully successful" is greater than the number of appraisal units at "meets fully successful" but none are rated "does not meet fully successful."	<u>Fully Successful</u> The number of appraisal units at "meets fully successful" is equal to or is greater than the number of appraisal units at "exceeds fully successful." No critical element is rated "does not meet fully successful."	<u>Marginal</u> More appraisal units are at "does not meet fully successful" than at "exceeds fully successful" and no critical element is rated "does not meet fully successful."	<u>Unacceptable</u> One or more critical elements rated "does not meet fully successful."

Employee Summary Rating Levels:

Outstanding: At the outstanding level, the employee's level of performance demonstrates outstanding contributions to the accomplishment of the Department, Agency, and/or Staff Office mission. At this level, the employee demonstrates a mastery of the required technical skills and a thorough understanding of the mission of the organization. The employee's efforts have a fundamental impact on the completion of program objectives. The employee produces an exceptional quality and quantity of work significantly ahead of established schedules or deadlines and with very little or no supervision. Performance for each element consistently exceeds the meets "Fully Successful" level.

Superior: At the superior level of performance, the employee demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the objectives of the job and the procedures for accomplishing them. At this level, the employee produces a very high quality and quantity of work ahead of established schedules or deadlines and with minimal supervision.

Fully Successful: At the fully successful level of performance, the employee demonstrates quality work in support of the Department, Agency, and/or Staff Office mission. At this level, the employee effectively applies technical skills and organizational knowledge to successfully complete work products. The employee successfully carries out regularly assigned duties as well as difficult special assignments. The employee produces the expected quality and quantity of work and meets deadlines or schedules for completion of work.

Marginal: At the marginal level of performance, the employee demonstrates the need for improvement to achieve a rating of "fully successful." At this level, the employee's work products frequently need revision or adjustments, often requiring assistance from the supervisor and/or peers. Organizational goals and objectives are only met because of close supervision.

Unacceptable: At the unacceptable level of performance, the employee does not meet the established performance standards for meets "fully successful" in one or more of the employee's critical elements. At this level, the employee's work products do not meet the minimum requirements expected and corrective action must be consistent with established procedures for unacceptable performance.

Strategic Alignment

All employee performance plans must align with the Department, Agency, and/or Staff Office goals and objectives. The performance plan must include at least one results-oriented performance element linked to the strategic goals and objectives of the organization such as Mission Results. Employee performance plans must include balanced, credible measures of performance for each performance element and identify the accomplishment of organizational objectives.

Departmental Strategic Goals and Management Initiatives

Strategic Goals:

1. Assist rural communities to create prosperity so they are self-sustaining, repopulating, and economically thriving.
2. Ensure our national forests and private working lands are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change, while enhancing our water resources.
3. Help America promote sustainable agricultural production and biotechnology exports as America works to increase food security.
4. Ensure that all of America's children have access to safe, nutritious, and balanced meals.

Management Initiatives:

- I. Engage USDA employees to transform USDA into a model agency.
- II. Provide civil rights services to Agriculture employees and customers.
- III. Coordinate outreach and improve consultation and collaboration efforts to increase access to USDA programs and services.
- IV. Leverage USDA Departmental Management to increase performance, efficiency, and alignment.
- V. Optimize Information Technology (IT) policy and applications.
- VI. Optimize USDA "green" or sustainable operations.
- VII. Enhance USDA homeland security and emergency preparedness to protect USDA employees and the public.
- VIII. Enhance the USDA Human Resources process to recruit and hire skilled, diverse individuals to meet the program needs of USDA.

Agency Strategic Goals and Management Initiatives

DM Strategic Goals:

1. Provide effective policy, services and coordination.
2. Ensure all USDA programs and activities are accessible and accountable.
3. Transform Departmental Management into a sustainable and high performing organization.

OHRM Operational Plan FY 2010 Priorities:

- Effective Leadership.
- Communication.
- Accountability, Responsibility, and Integrity.
- Employee Development.
- Awards Program.
- Diversity and Recruitment.
- Family Friendly Employee Flexibilities.
- Mission-Oriented Planning.
- Results-Based Performance Management.
- Training.
- Customer Service.
- E-Government Initiatives.

Element 1 - Mission Results (Mandatory/Critical). This element measures the achievement of program strategic goals and initiatives within assigned functional areas of responsibility and the employee's contributions to the overall accomplishment of Departmental, DM, and OHRM strategic objectives.

Performance Requirements:

This is the one mandatory/critical OHRM performance element that measures results, specifically results contributing to the mission of the organization. Performance requirements in the element are expressed in terms of measurable results that directly link to and meet the organizational goals and objectives required of the employee during the appraisal period.

Instructions:

In the table below, describe the performance goals and measures applicable to your position in OHRM. Identify performance measures to include specific accomplishments, outcomes, deliverables, and/or target dates. The employee will be accountable for accomplishing these measures during the appraisal period and will be expected to address completion of them in their annual accomplishment report. Accomplishing the results-focused performance measures described below constitute meeting the "Fully Successful" element level. There is no minimum number of performance requirements. Requirements are determined by the rating official in consultation (direct communication) with the employee.

Evaluation Method:

Performance will be assessed by the supervisor through (1) observation, (2) review of work product results, and (3) discussions with the employee, co-workers, customers, and/or supervisors.

Linkage (List the Goal and/or Strategy and Objective):	Performance Measures (List the specific accomplishments, outcomes, deliverables, and/or target dates):
<p>Example 1 (Applicable to OHRM HR Specialists, Program Managers and Senior Specialists)</p> <p>USDA Management Initiative I. Engage USDA employees to transform USDA into a model agency and VIII. Enhance the USDA Human Resources process to recruit and hire skilled, diverse individuals to meet the program needs of USDA.</p> <p>DM Strategic Goal 1. Provide effective policy, services, and coordination.</p> <p>Objective 1. Develop, implement, and manage clear and effective policy guidance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret requirements and establish new directives, policies, processes, and systems related to human resources management by September 30, 2010 to ensure effective program delivery with agency and mission area collaboration. This includes one or more human resources management initiatives below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Veteran's Employment Initiatives ○ USDA Internship Program ○ Administrative Mgmt Dev. Program and Improvements ○ Special Hiring and Employment. Authorities ○ Family Friendly Flexibilities ○ Performance. Management. Systems. for SES & SL/ST workforce. • Successfully completes assigned program-related policy directives or substantive program guidance in draft that is provided to OHRM senior management in order to obtain all the necessary approvals by assigned target dates. The drafts are clear, accurate, thorough, and appropriately written and formatted. Monitors directives and/or policy guidance to expedite approval and issuance. Consistently accurate and approved policy and guidance is maintained on the OHRM-HRP website. • Provides technical oversight for assigned programs and works to continually evaluate and improve them from a programmatic perspective.

<p><i>Example 1 (cont)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes assignments and meets deadlines and quality expectations on various projects including the issuance of policy and guidance and responses/requests to OPM, GAO, and executive USDA leadership to ensure outcomes meet planned objectives. • Provides advice, guidance, and recommendations to the Director and Deputy Director, and Division Director, concerning OHRM issues. Recommendations and contributions are generally accepted because they are based on demonstrated sound judgment and analyses, cost effectiveness, and sensitivity to the effects on overall policy. Such recommendations range from strategic approaches to very broad problems to tactical solutions impacting individual programs or issues. • Identifies and issues relevant program-related guidance within reasonable time frames. For purposes of this performance plan, reasonable is defined by the circumstances of the situation at hand (i.e., need to meet an external deadline, authority of requestor, urgency, consequences). Misses no more than three such opportunities to provide timely and relevant guidance. • Effectively leads and or participates in conferences and meetings with key officials from USDA, OPM, OMB, and other agencies concerning significant human resources issues, policy development, legislation and precedence-setting matters as requested. In this role, advice and guidance is technically accurate, activities are coordinated and facilitated effectively, and the needs of the customer are met. Serves on inter-agency, departmental, and agency work groups and task forces, and expert boards to research, develop, and improve HR policy.
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<p>Example 2 (Applicable to OHRM Administrative Support Staff)</p> <p>USDA Management Initiative I. Engage USDA employees to transform USDA into a model agency.</p> <p>DM Strategic Goal 1. Provide effective policy, services, and coordination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes assignments and meets quality expectations for various projects ensuring outcomes meet planned objectives and are accomplished within agreed upon timeframes established between the employee and the originator. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Correspondence and reports are clear, complete, comply with organizational policy, and are grammatically correct. Final documents seldom contain errors and reflect positively upon OHRM. ○ Reports, notebooks of information, and briefing and/or other packages developed in support of HR initiatives are arranged in an organized manner, easy to access, and are of acceptable presentation. ○ Competently and tactfully screens telephone calls and visitors, many who are senior level officials in the Department. Few complaints are received. ○ Keeps thorough track of assignments, promptly acknowledging receipt, and follows through to completion ensuring the originator is informed of all stages of the process. ○ Files are easily retrievable, logically organized, clearly labeled, and usually filled within 5 days of receipt.
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<p>Element Rating: Instructions: At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with the standards and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation and employee accomplishment report, as necessary.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Exceeds Fully Successful</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Meets Fully Successful</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet Fully Successful</p>
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Element 2 – Communications/Customer Service and Civil Rights/Equal Employment Opportunity (Mandatory/Critical). This element measures an employee’s performance establishing and nurturing effective working relationships with all OHRM staff, customers, and stakeholders both internal and external to USDA. It also measures the extent to which the employee performs his/her duties in a manner which consistently demonstrates commitment and adherence to civil rights/equal employment opportunity (CR/EEO) laws, regulations, and policy.

Performance Requirements

This is a mandatory/critical OHRM performance element. The performance requirements in this element are expressed in terms of narrative quantitative and qualitative expectations. Meeting the requirements below constitute meeting the “Fully Successful” element level. This element applies as written and may not be changed.

Evaluation Method:

Performance will be assessed by the supervisor through (1) observation, (2) review of work product results, and (3) discussion with the employee, co-workers, customers, and/or supervisors.

Written responses are concise, clear, factually accurate, logically ordered, and substantially free of errors. They are provided within designated or negotiated time frames with the supervisor, organization and/or customer.

Oral responses are clear, courteous and directly address issues and questions on relevant issues. Provides technical expertise on initiatives and actions required to establish and maintain effective delivery of assigned programs.

Maintains professional relationships and interactions with OHRM staff, customers, and internal and external stakeholders to advance OHRM interests and promote collaboration, two-way communication, teamwork, and results. Represents USDA effectively in the performance of duties.

Continually informs supervisor and OHRM management of sensitive or controversial emerging issues and offers well thought-out recommendations to prevent and/or respond to developing problems.

Seeks and actively listens to others questions, ideas, and concerns; shows respect for and considers diverse viewpoints, following up to ensure understanding.

Balances multiple and sometimes competing interests and adjusts priorities in response to changing demands. Analyzes customer feedback and identifies needs and concerns in making decisions, devising solutions, and resolving conflicts.

Actively supports and assists with OHRM cross functional team initiatives when requested, such as the Secretary’s Honor Awards program, diversity and recruitment activities, audit teams, conferences, training initiatives or other activities where all hands resources would be needed or necessary.

Civil Rights/Equal Employment Opportunity Standards for Nonsupervisory Positions:

Completes annual CR/EEO training as required within established timeframes.

Models appropriate behavior by treating customers, colleagues, employees, and other internal and external stakeholders with respect, courtesy, and sensitivity.

Effectively works with customers, peers and stakeholders.

Element Rating: Instructions: At the end of the rating period, compare the employee’s performance with the standards and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation and employee accomplishment report, as necessary.

- ☐ Exceeds Fully Successful
- ☐ Meets Fully Successful
- ☐ Does Not Meet Fully Successful

Element 3 – Innovation (Mandatory/Non-Critical): This element measures the employee’s ability to promote the development of new, innovative and resourceful ways to deliver better quality products and services to client agencies and customers.

Performance Requirements:

This is a mandatory/non-critical OHRM performance element. The performance requirements in this element are expressed in terms of narrative quantitative and qualitative expectations. Meeting the requirements below constitute meeting the “*Fully Successful*” element level. This element applies as written and may not be changed.

Evaluation Method:

Performance will be assessed by the supervisor through (1) observation, (2) review of work product results, and (3) discussion with the employee, co-workers, customers, and/or supervisors.

Champions change and transition in OHRM. Seeks alternative solutions and creative approaches to problem solving. Research on best practices (benchmarking) usually reflects thorough analysis and recommendations. Is resourceful in developing approaches with limited means or funds.

Takes the lead in team situations, where appropriate, to incorporate customer needs and requirements in the effective development of new programs, products and services.

Participates in collaborative partnerships, workgroups, and teams, as needed, “where out of the box” thinking is required. Contributes in a competent and professional manner.

Works with customer organizations to develop ways to improve the services OHRM provides.

Special projects are regularly completed on time in a competent, accurate, and thorough manner. Completed projects comply with regulations, procedures and established processes and reflect research and collaboration with others as required.

Keeps abreast of new developments that may affect assigned functional area.

Shares with co-workers relevant material that may have not been seen by others.

As requested, reviews, on a timely basis and provides professional comments on draft regulations, policies, and procedures.

Element Rating: Instructions: At the end of the rating period, compare the employee’s performance with the standards and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation and employee accomplishment report, as necessary.

- ☐ Exceeds Fully Successful
- ☐ Meets Fully Successful
- ☐ Does Not Meet Fully Successful

Element 4 – Supervision and Human Resources Management (Mandatory/Critical and required for those employees officially designated as supervisors in their position description). This element measures an employee’s leadership and management of human resources to accomplish assigned responsibilities and to achieve Departmental, DM, and OHRM goals.

Performance Requirements:

This is a mandatory/critical OHRM performance element. The performance requirements in this element are expressed in terms of narrative quantitative and qualitative expectations. Meeting the requirements below constitute meeting the “Fully Successful” element level. This element applies as written and may not be changed.

Evaluation Method:

Performance will be assessed by the supervisor through (1) observation, (2) review of work product results, and (3) discussion with the employee, co-workers, customers, and/or supervisors.

Creates and sustains a positive workplace that inspires others to work together cooperatively and effectively to support the organization’s mission and goals; openly addresses conflict, disagreement, and differences in perspective; and produces amicable and effective resolutions. Exhibits a leadership style that demonstrates integrity, sound judgment, flexibility and high ethical standards of public service.

Organizational goals, objectives, priorities, work assignments, and deadlines are clearly communicated to employees. Resources and priorities are adjusted to meet workload demands. Human Resources initiatives and strategies are implemented in accordance with Departmental and Agency policy. Employees are encouraged to participate in employee surveys to assist the organization in measuring organizational health, morale, and satisfaction.

Ensures workforce has the time and tools needed to successfully complete required trainings, employee orientation, and security briefings by assigned due dates and/or in accordance with Department/OHRM policy.

Accountability: Agency strategic/performance plans, corporate priorities, and other management systems are used to ensure subordinate employee’s performance plans are linked to outcomes and to overall organizational performance goals/objectives, and focus on results achieved. Ensures all ratable employees receive a progress (mid-year) review and a rating of record during the appraisal period, and that all employees are appraised realistically against clear, measureable standards of performance and within established time frames. Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition. Data from employee feedback is used as an indicator of general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Maintains a positive organizational environment that promotes diversity, inclusion, innovation, initiative, open and honest communication, and teamwork among employees and peers. Ensures employees have the tools and training to do their jobs.

Employee Perspective: Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting workforce or programs.

Customer Perspective: Ensures a high degree of responsiveness to organizational leadership, the public, and internal and external customers. Continuously reviews and monitors organizational performance to achieve agency mission results and considers the customer’s point of view. Consults and collaborates and build partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders, and takes decisive actions in accordance with law, regulation, and Department policy. Continuously seeks to improve business processes, sharing those efforts with other units to improve overall Department performance. Systematically listens to customers and gathers their feedback, actively seeking to identify their needs and expectations, and effectively communicating those needs and expectations to employees. Ensures employees are prompt, professional, fair and responsible to the circumstances of individual customers to the extent permitted by law and regulation.

Element Rating: Instructions: At the end of the rating period, compare the employee’s performance with the standards and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation and employee accomplishment report, as necessary.

- ☐ Exceeds Fully Successful
- ☐ Meets Fully Successful
- ☐ Does Not Meet Fully Successful

Element 5 – Civil Rights (Mandatory/Critical and required for those employees officially designated as supervisors in their position description). This element measures an employee’s contributions to civil rights through the development, implementation, and advancement of civil rights strategic goals; enforcement of civil rights laws, rules, regulations; and in holding subordinate supervisors accountable for achieving measureable civil rights goals and objectives in all employment, program delivery, and other administrative activity.

Performance Requirements:

This is a mandatory/critical OHRM performance element. The performance requirements in this element are expressed in terms of narrative quantitative and qualitative expectations. Meeting the requirements below constitute meeting the “Fully Successful” element level. This element applies as written and may not be changed.

Evaluation Method:

Performance will be assessed by the supervisor through (1) observation, (2) review of work product results, and (3) discussion with the employee, co-workers, customers, and/or supervisors.

Goals and objectives from the DM Strategic Plan and OHRM’s priorities related to accountability, program delivery, outreach, workforce diversity, employment practices, resources and structure, performance, administrative activities, communications and reporting are met.

Demonstrates an understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity and ensures fair and equitable program delivery.

Ensures subordinate supervisors exercise effective managerial, communication and interpersonal skills to supervise and develop a diverse workforce.

The importance of Civil Rights and Equal Employment is communicated to unit employees at least once during the rating cycle, and other Civil Rights and Equal Employment policies and topics are routinely discussed at staff meetings.

Completes and ensures subordinate employees have the time and tools needed to complete annual civil rights training within identified timeframes and agency and departmental requirements.

Makes good faith efforts to resolve employment complaints and workforce disputes at all times, particularly early in the process, by offering alternative dispute resolution, training, and alternative assignments; by timely response to requests for information from EEO counselors, mediators, investigators, and adjudicators; and by prompt implementation of settlement agreements.

Element Rating: Instructions: At the end of the rating period, compare the employee’s performance with the standards and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation and employee accomplishment report, as necessary.

- ☐ Exceeds Fully Successful
- ☐ Meets Fully Successful
- ☐ Does Not Meet Fully Successful